

[REDACTED]

file

9 September 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Case 32254 - Fred Z. Launags

1. On 23 August 1966, [] made contact with [] NY/FO to set up an appointment with [] of the American Friends of Refugees, to discuss the possible implementation of a recommendation made previously in the Fred Launags case. [] stated that he had made a tentative appointment for 1430 hours at [] office, 866 East 45th Street in the United Nations Plaza. [] told [] that he was unable to make contact with Launags and that [] would set out to try to locate him prior to meeting with []
2. [] made several calls to Launags residence and spoke to Launags landlady, Mrs. Zards who confirmed that Launags was still living in her house but that he was at work. She said that as far as she knew Launags was still working at the TWA Lounge at Kennedy International Airport. Unable to locate Launags, [] proceeded to the meeting with []
3. As an introduction, [] was told that [] had discussed this matter with [] of the German Desk, who gave her approval to contact [] but that she wanted [] to be the final judge on whether or not the recommendation could be implemented through [] office. In other words the final decision was to be made by []. The Launags case and its ramifications were passed on to [] who was very attentive and sympathetic to the problem at hand. After hearing the problem -- the monitoring and funding of Launags through the American Friends of Refugees -- [] agreed that it was a logical problem for his office to handle and he could see no objections to it being done through him. There was only one hurdle which [] felt had to be worked out to prevent any possibility of "blowing his cover story". [] said that we would have to work on some indirect way to bring the American Friends of Refugees organization to Launags attention and to have him come personally in to [] office. It was thought unwise to have [] suggest this channel for rear that Launags would link [] to CIA, which with his previous experience in the Agency, he could very likely do. [] suggested using a friend of his, who used to be known as "Slavic" to [] and who was now doing very well as an engineer in Stamford, Conn. [] said that Slavic's true name was Pechatkin and that he was now under the assumed name of Marcilger. [] told [] that he would check this out with [] and would advise him. [] was to do nothing until he hears from us. [] also asked that the transfer of any monies for this matter would have to be channeled through []

Vyacheslav Pechatkin. Former contract agent.
Terminated approx 1959, after some problems.
Much better now to re-initiate my contact
with him for this purpose. I will

changed his
name legally

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 382B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

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office--"to keep his books straight". [] said that he remembers having been told something about this matter by [] last year so this did not come to him as a complete surprise. [] was also interested in the case because of his interest in the Latvian group- [] wife is a Latvian and [] is well acquainted with that group. It must be underlined here that [] seems to be a well qualified individual for his job and is more than willing to assist us in every way--he is unlike most people who look at the negative side of doing things rather than taking a positive approach. He felt that this type of case is exactly the type of case he should be handling. [] said that he has many walk-ins to his office who he has to assist just as cover--so why not some one in whom the Agency is interested. Except for the introduction of Launags into [] office, the matter appeared resolved so [] took leave from [] promising that we would advise him of our next move.

4. [] was contacted by phone from New York, after the meeting with [] to advise him of the progress made and to get his reaction to using Slavic as the intermediary. [] was pleased with the outcome but was not in favor of bringing Slavic into the Launags' picture. [] said he had his reasons and would explain later.

5. [] called Launags residence again and this time was successful in talking directly to him making a rendezvous for dinner at 6:30 PM. [] picked up Launags in front of the Modern Arts Museum on 53rd Street between 5th and 6th Avenues. We drove to the Sea Fare Restaurant at 25 West 56th St., where we spent the next three hours chatting, drinking and dining.

6. The first topic of discussion with Launags was trying to determine the reason for losing his last job--at the Conde Nast House of Publications. Launags said that it was a very good job and he was well paid -- \$80.00 a week take home pay -- for making and serving coffee for the employees at this publishing house. However, he said that he had disagreements with his boss--whose orders to Launags were consistently being changed and Fred claimed he became confused and couldn't keep up with them. So, in the true Launags fashion, he argued with his boss and became very disagreeable -- hence, the management fired Fred. Launags regretted the loss of this job because he liked it very much. He also complained that there wasn't very much to do about three hours work--and he had a lot of time on his hands -- Fred is a person who has to be moving all the time and idleness provokes nervousness. What irritated Launags about this job was that the person who fired him - was a woman.

7. Launags didn't remain jobless very long -- he went right out to Kennedy International Airport at the International Inn and took a job on the night clean-up crew working from 11:00 PM through the night until 7:00 AM. He claimed he was quite pleased with this job too--he works with a group of 6-8 men in cleaning the lounges in the restaurants and lobbies. He earns about \$55.00 take-home pay plus a chit for breakfast when he is finished in the morning.

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8. Throughout the dinner Launags spoke about some of the more unfortunate aspects of his life in the USA but certainly not in desperation but rather in a philosophical way, admitting much of it as being his own fault. He "let his hair down" saying that there are few people to whom he can talk and that he enjoys our meetings. Launags was well-dressed and neat in appearance for a change--as a rule he goes about quite sporty. Launags recommended the restaurant saying that he has had dinner there before -- in good times. He was very grateful for the opportunity to enjoy a "good dinner in a respectable and pleasant atmosphere" because he frankly can't afford it--except as a guest of [] He was urged to order wine--if he so desired--which he did, saying that "I used to have it before". The three hours spent in this atmosphere did much to give him a buoyant feeling of importance and prestige, which of course, he seldom experiences in his every day life.

9. Launags said that he has visited some of his friends in Babylon, Long Island, to see about going back to work for the General Construction Co. He met up with the man to whom he is indebted for about \$500.00 but who would accept \$200.00 to settle the account. Fred said that this man is now venturing into business himself and Fred feels that -- if he can pay off his debt--this individual might consider accepting him into his business venture. To lift Launags morale and to follow-up on our promise--to try to help him out of his financial problems-[] gave Fred \$100.00 with instructions to see his friend and pay off \$100.00 or the \$200.00 debt in order to demonstrate that he has not forgotten about his debt thereby ingratiating himself. Fred promised he would see his friend as soon as possible to pay him. [] also gave him \$20.00 to send to his daughter as his monthly contribution to her expenditures at school. Launags was very grateful and appreciative for this financial//to the point of tears. Launags was encouraged and urged to try hard to control himself and his urge to argue and to keep the job he has at the International Inn. After a pleasant three hour dinner, Fred excused himself--with no effects of the wine he had consumed--by the way, he refused a second bottle of wine, stating that he does not want to appear for work in an inebriated condition--and went to work at 10:00 PM. He promised to write and or to call on any change of status.

10. After returning to Washington, [] received a postcard from Launags dated 4 September, indicating that he is still employed at the International Hotel at the Kennedy Airport and has recently been given a raise. He further states he has not paid off the \$100.00 to his friend but shall do so soonest and thanks[] for his kindness.

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11. [] is due back from an overseas TDY trip on 12 Sep.,
at which time, this matter will be re-discussed.

[] []

cc: [] [] w/encl
Post Card

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~